DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 243 523 JC 840 196

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TITLE Shaping Change: New Goals and New Roles.
PUB DATE 11 Apr 84
NOTE 48p.; Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the California Association of Community Colleges Commission on Research (Asilomar, CA, April 11-13, 1984).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Viewpoints (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Change Strategies; College Faculty; College Libraries; College Planning; College Programs; *College Role; *Community Colleges; Computer Oriented Programs; *Educational Change; Educational Finance; Educational Research; Financial Problems; School Business Relationship; Two Year Colleges; Two Year College Students
IDENTIFIERS *California

ABSTRACT

The forces influencing or reflecting change in California's community colleges are discussed in this paper in the context of the crisis of identity facing these institutions. First, factors contributing to the rapid expansion of community college education in California are outlined, and the consequences of that growth are examined. Next, the importance of research in shaping change is underscored with the argument that the well-being of a college depends on the ability of its members to provide accurate and relevant information as the basis for action and the framework for the development of informed public opinion. Next, the changes likely to affect community colleges in coming years, especially cutbacks in funding, are discussed, and the need to redirect resources toward higher quality education is stressed. The following section addresses changes in the college community, with special focus on students and faculty, the role of counselors and student services, college programs, associate degrees, and transfer rates. Next, the need for new services to support quality in educational programs is stressed, highlighting the role of libraries and computer services. Finally, the potential of partnerships between the community colleges and private businesses and industry is discussed as a way of dealing with funding problems. (HB)

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Remarks by Leslie Koltai, Chancellor
Los Angeles Community College District
CACC Commission on Research
Asilomar, California
April 11, 1984

SHAPING CHANGE: NEW GOALS AND NEW ROLES

Your conference has the theme of "Shaping Change," and your invitation asked me to speak on demographic change, reform, fiscal stress, and the like. These topics are timely, and community colleges certainly are challenged by the declining skills of entering students, by the growing numbers of members of ethic and racial minorities in our state, and by the new skills required in our nation's economy. However, these topics are best considered within the context of the general crisis facing community colleges, which is, in large measure, a crisis of identity.

While our political and fiscal fortunes may improve, none of us should be sanguine about this crisis; it will not disappear by merely paying more attention to Sacramento or by hoping for "business as usual."

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To be sure, this year marked the first time in the history of California higher education that a prestigious entity of government, with widespread public support, was held hostage by the political establishment.

The origin of our present difficulty lies in the transformation of higher education and our inability to defend that transformation across a broad political spectrum.

The dramatic growth of California's community colleges was at least partially in response to the vast numbers of people coming to this state in search of a better life. For many of them, education was seen as the way to fulfill their dreams.

California's Master Plan for Higher Education was conceived as this wave of demand began to surge toward the institutions of higher education. In 1959, the Legislature requested the Liaison Committee of the University of California and the State Board of Education to adopt an encompassing strategy for the orderly expansion of higher education.

Overall, the Legislature found that competition among the public institutions for enrollments, facilities and programs had become excessive; that the State's bleak fiscal situation would restrict its ability to provide amply for all institutions; and the rapidly escalating expenditures in the face of student demand had to be controlled (Master Plan Survey Team, A Master Plan for Higher Education in California, 1960-1975. Sacramento, 1960, p. 20)

In short, the State needed a comprehensive policy to meet the challenge of increased demand. Specifically, the Donohoe Act, which was adopted by the Legislature in 1961 to implement the Master Plan, assigned the following functions to the community colleges:

> ...instruction through but not beyond the second year of college. These institutions may grant the associate in arts and the associate in science degree. Their program may include but shall not be limited to: standard collegiate courses for transfer to other institutions; vocational and technical fields leading to employment; general or liberal arts courses; and community services (Education Code, Section 66701, emphasis added).

From the wording of this statute, it is clear that the Master Plan mission for the community colleges was not some truncated emphasis on transfer and vocational education. From the beginning, the colleges were intended to be flexible and responsive to the growing needs for education throughout the entire population. In fact, the State unequivocally restated its commitment to comprehensive access in 1970: "The Legislature hereby reaffirms the commitment of the State of California to provide an appropriate place in California public high education for every student who is willing and able to benefit from attendance" (Education Code, Section 66200).

If enrollment growth and educational opportunity were central tenets of the Master Plan, the fifteen years following its adoption certainly fullfilled them. The University of California increased from five to eight general campuses, the State Colleges from 12 to 19 campuses, the community colleges from 63 to 106 campuses in seventy districts. State-supported enrollment increased by 167, 223, and 280 percent respectively, and community colleges alone almost doubled their enrollment between 1970 and 1975.

Enrollment growth after the Master Plan was, after all, more than a routine reflection of population trends or an extrapolation of traditional college-going rates. Rather, the growth represented a major reorientation about who should go to college, and when.

Since 1960, the student body has consisted of larger proportions of people from low-income families, women, and members of ethnic minority groups. Students have been encouraged to attend part-time if they had no other choice, to return for up-dating skills or changing careers, or to learn better ways of coping with the pressures of modern life. Clearly, community colleges led this integration of higher education, with their broad appeal of open access and their reputation of being oriented toward student needs rather than to subject matter per se.

Having participated in this change of higher education, we have taken this transformation too much for granted. As a result, we have failed to deal seriously enough with those who are more comfortable with older traditions. We have been naive about the social and political consensus which underlies our efforts, and we have been overly self-righteous when our effectiveness was questioned.

After all, the opening of higher education in America, especially among community colleges, is one of the great transformations of a major institution in our society, and change of that magnitude is never going to be welcomed by all.

To be sure, educational opportunity was extended to people who would not have otherwise enjoyed it, but many of the excesses during the period of growth did not really benefit them directly or promote equal access. In this vein, Harvard University's Patricia Cross, who is an astute observer of community colleges, has suggested that:

> "Much of the expansion resulted from catching a spirit that valued acceptance and tolerance over standards and value judgments. Requirements disappeared from the curriculum; testing even from purposes of guidance and placement became a no-no; there was a hesitancy to enforce demands upon students, and inflated grades devalued the currency of college credit.

... The problem came when we lost sight of the purpose of access--which was not merely to permit students to enter colleges but to enable them to learn. ...Indeed, it might be said that there is no true equality until each student is offered the right to do his or her best. Sad to say, we have not been offering that right to either high-achieving or low-achieving students. Denial of the opportunity to take pride in one's accomplishments is a serious infringement on educational rights. And where standards have been compromised, students are denied the very basic human right to feel good about themselves and their accomplishments" (K. Patricia Cross, "On Old Practices and New Purposes in Education," Presented to the Conference on Remedial and Developmental Mathematics in College: Issues and Innovations, New York City, April 9, 1981).

While much of that description is accurate, I disagree with the impliication that these developments were totally destructive. Higher education needed to be opened up, both in terms of its educational philosophy and the composition of the student body. In the short-run, it would not have been possible to transform our institutions without some of the educational malpractices which Dr. Cross and others now lay at our doorstep.

It is with these points in mind that I offer 5 observations on forces influencing or reflecting change in California's community colleges:

1. the status of research
2. the impact of change
3. changes in the college community - students, faculty, programs, associate degrees
4. need for new services - libraries, computers
5. need for new partnership - private business and industry

RESEARCH

In terms of the ultimate uses of research, I am reminded of an observation by Paul Valery, who said that while we hope vaguely, we dread precisely. Valery would probably add that is is research that tells us what we can hope for -- and what we should dread.

Educational research provides the framework for vital decisions concerning such crucial issues as allocation of financial, physical and human resources. But it does so in a framework that is open to creative interpretation -- in fact, the interpretation is sometimes so creative that the conclusions of the practitioner bear little resemblance to the conclusions of the researcher.

In fact, Elliot Eisner, Professor at the Stanford University School of Education, noted in a recent issue of Kappan magazine, that too often, the practitioner draws conclusions without even reading the research.

He added that really imaginative ideas, concepts and theories of educational practice will only emerge from closer relationships between the two. And out of such efforts can come methods of inquiry that he says will not "try to achieve levels of precision that are better suited to fields other than our own."

Part of the difficulty comes from the fact that many of the important educational policy decisions made in recent years have been a reaction to shifts in public opinion, rather than a response to hard data.

Mark Yudof, associate dean of the School of Law at the University of Texas, notes that the Eighties have had a unique educational policy climate in which major changes have been brought about -- not by break-throughs in research and analysis, but by symbols of consensus.

In the issue of Kappan to which I referred earlier, Yudof says that "policymakers are using public opinion, not hard data, to stimulate policy change." Eisner agrees, adding that, today, rhetoric has more influence over changing educational priorities than does hard research.

This "new consensus looks to 'hard' variables in terms of student outcomes," Yudof says, "but is compelled to rely upon soft, difficult-to-measure variables to reach those ends," thus making it even more difficult to encourage decisions based upon careful and thoughtful interpretation of available data.

This undermines the function of research as a "unique and independent force," serving what Arthur Jensen of the UC Berkeley Institute of Human Learning calls "the Reality Principle."

Jensen says researchers must be free to "discover and to represent the educational realities that prevail -- despite shifting politics and policies."

He says that "only then can research hope to gain respect and the power to influence policy in the only way it legitimately can -- as dependable knowledge."

This emphasis on opinion rather than data does not mean, however, that the need for research is any less than it has been in the past. Quite the contrary. But Richard Richardson of the University of Arizona points out that it is a political reality that research outcomes must consider -- and perhaps even be targeted to -- specific constituencies.

In a soon-to-be-published book, Community College Leaders for Tomorrow, Richardson says educational research must continue to establish "baseline data about the extent to which high-priority outcomes are currently being achieved."

But he also notes that community colleges "have been notoriously lax in collecting this type of data."

No news is not good news, in terms of educational research, because "the absence of data is bound to provoke estimates by external agencies that are more damaging than the actual data."

There are a number of problems inherent in this growing demand for data.

Everyone from Naisbitt (Megatrends) to Peters and Waterman (Search for Excellence) acknowledges that we are in an information age -- but not everyone appreciates just how expensive it is to collect and maintain this information.

For example, a study of research activities in the Los Angeles Community College District (January, 1981) indicated that budgets allocated to research averaged slightly more than $50,000 per year at the District's nine colleges. The research time was primarily spent on identifying trends in demographics, enrollments and grade distribution; follow-up studies of graduating students, and evaluation of existing programs and procedures.

But the researchers surveyed for this study also indicated that each of these activities should be expanded.

I believe the implications are clear -- if we don't provide data for legislators and other external agencies, they will draw upon their own perceptions as they continue to make decisions that will dramatically affect the future of California's community colleges. The well-being of our institutions depends upon our ability to provide accurate, relevant information to serve as a basis for their actions -- and as a framework for the development of informed public opinion.

IMPACT OF CHANGE

That the story of California's community colleges in recent years is one of unprecedented change. And, unfortunately, there is only so much change that any institution or system can absorb with a given period of time. The scenario, then, has been a struggle for balance between change and stability, recognizing that stability is often purchased at a very high price. As Richardson says, it is bought "at the expense of our ability to respond quickly to changes in the external environment, which has been the primary stock-in-trade of our colleges for more than two decades."

Change will continue to be our challenge -- but it will be of a different nature than during the past decades. It will be change without growth -- change of a horizontal rather than a vertical nature.

In the past, two-year colleges have subscribed to the "add-on" syndrome -- if a problem couldn't be solved using existing facilities or programs, then we added more in order to deal with the situation. That will not longer be possible -- we will now have to delete something each time we choose to add something else -- a new experience for community college leaders, to be sure.

Adding to the difficulties surrounding change has been the calcification of the decision-making process, due to such factors as collective bargaining, decreased options for institutional responses, and the previously mentioned lack of discretionary income.

As community colleges struggle to recover from the past year, there is one thing we should keep in mind. The decline in enrollment statewide was not the result of a decline in the demand for the educational programs and services we provide. It was, instead, a direct result of budget cuts, which lessened our ability to respond to that demand.

The options open to our institutions are limited -- and they are influenced by budget realities more than ever before. In fact, community colleges have become what Richard Richardson calls "resource dependent" in all that the term implies -- they must provide that which is satisfactory to those who are paying the bills.

The conflict has arisen when there have been differences in priorities between what the colleges believe is wanted and needed, and what is believed to be important by those who control the purse strings.

Our dilemma, then, has been to either change our priorities, to try to work with those with the money to change theirs -- or to try to arrive at a middle ground with which we can all live with some semblance of stability.

This relationship with those in control of funding has created a need for community colleges to define our own responsibility more carefully -- or else face the possibility of having it done for us by those who may not fully understand the colleges or the purpose they serve.

This self-examination should involve both a refocusing on quality -- and an analysis of how that focus will relate to the number of students in our institutions. It must incorporate efforts to improve our relationships with the high schools supplying many of our students. And it must also include efforts to improve retention, recognizing the fact that the drop-out rate for community college students is around 57 percent, while that at four-year institutions is about 28 percent.

The key words in terms of retention must be student involvement -- students must make a commitment to their education if they are going to be successful in college.

And yet, as David Reisman has pointed out, community colleges have offered students what they believe to be the ultimate virtue -- absolutely minimal commitment.

Redirection of Resources

If, as we expect, we cannot assume a great influx of new resources -- and if, as we also expect, we will be called upon to demonstrate clearly the successes of community colleges, then what is needed is the redirection of resources toward higher quality -- measurably higher quality.

As Howard Bowen outlines in his book Adult Learning, Higher Education and the Economics of Unused Capacity, there are concrete steps that can be taken to achieve those goals. These include the improvement of: diagnostic services, content within and between disciplines, delivery systems and teaching methodology, evaluation methodology, and outcomes follow-up.

Quality can be measured, as well, through such means as student performance and achievement, gains in skills, grade point average comparisons, credits attempted and completed, student satisfaction and, of course, faculty satisfaction.

I submit to you that we can produce quality education in community colleges -- if we are given the appropriate tools and the appropriate environment.

There is, of course, a basic conflict between a call for quality and a system in which funding is based upon the number of students who attend our institutions. There are those who have a simple answer to the "quality revolution" -- which is to exclude more and more students.

This has led to increased discussion of implementation of an "academic floor" -- a level of skill competency below which students would not be admitted to community college programs.

And it has led to the actual exclusion of thousands of students in the Los Angeles Community College District alone --we had to exclude 6,300 students who sought to re-enroll because they were not able to meet our standards of performance.

Once again, this demonstrates the tremendous conflict between excellence and access -- as well as the impact on funding that is tied to average daily attendance.

The new philosophy suggests that California's community colleges do offer opportunity for all -- but that there is a limit in terms of how long that opportunity lasts. There is a reluctance to provide opportunity on an open-ended basis -- student commitment is not only called for -- it is a necessity.

CHANGES IN THE COLLEGE COMMUNITY - STUDENTS, FACULTY, PROGRAMS, ASSOCIATE DEGREES

The third are of observations involves the change occuring in the student body, the faculty and educational programs.

In this, as in the other areas to which I refer this evening, there have been tremendous changes -- changes which must be considered in planning for the future. Over the years, we have enjoyed a fairly consistent -- even an escalating -- demand for community college programs. In fact, the enrollment cap was seen by many as a punitive reaction to our healthy growth in response to student demand. But the future holds quite a different story.

The changes ahead will require new responses -- and a great deal more emphasis on enrollment projections and analysis. Analysis of data on high school graduation rates, college entry and retention rates, enrollment rates for older and foreign students, and patterns for full-time versus part-time students will be crucial to successful adaptation to what could be dramatic enrollment declines.

David Breneman, who authored the book Financing Community Colleges with Susan Nelson, points out the importance of the planning process in dealing with what he also suggests could be severe fluctuations in enrollment patterns caused by already apparent characteristics in the pool of individuals from which we draw our students.

In analyzing enrollment-related questions, Breneman suggests that we ask the following questions:

- is the planning process adequate? How accurate have projections been?
- what is the relationship between enrollment, costs and revenues?
- what is student attrition rate and what has been done about it?
- have estimates been established for marginal (incremental) costs or estimates of fixed and variable costs? How is the data used in planning?

- how is the college attracting new clientele?
- how flexible is the college in shifting program directions?
- what are alternative uses for campus buildings? And,
- what is the impact of deferred maintenance and aging equipment on enrollment?

Once again, community colleges will look to you, the researchers, to provide us with these answers, for one of the most valuable uses of research is examination of the students we serve. For, as Barbara Mertes noted in her recent analysis of community colleges, Mission, Finance, Accountability: A Framework for Improvement, community college administrators must address the question, "Curriculum for whom?"

California's pattern of high school graduates reflects a decline from a 1975 high of 293,941 to a low of 260,229 in 1981 and then increased 2% to 263,924 in 1982. The college going rates of these graduates, however, remained remarkably stable.

In 1974, 54% of all California's high school graduates enrolled in the public postsecondary system; of these 76.8% (41.3% of all graduates) enrolled in community colleges. In 1982, 58% of the state's high school graduates enrolled in public higher education; of this group 73.5% (42.8% of graduates) chose community colleges.

The number of high school graduates in Los Angeles County declined 15% from a high of 90,817 in 1974 to 76,814 in 1982. As for the state, the number of 1982 graduates was greater than in 1981. In 1981, however, the college-going rates for the graduates reached all time highs of 63.3% entering public postsecondary institutions and 45.1% entering community colleges. In 1982, 41% of all graduates (and 70% of all those going on to college) chose to enroll in community colleges.

The Los Angeles Community College District serves 62 feeder high schools from seven school district which produce approximately 43% of the graduates from Los Angeles County high schools. In 1982, 33,334 high school students graduated from these feeder schools. The number dropped 2% to 32,688 in 1983 and the number of seniors enrolled in Spring 1984 has declined another 2% to 31,924.

The high school districts range from the affluent, predominantly Anglo, Beverly Hills and Palos Verdes Penninsula districts, from which 90 to 95% of graduates plan to enroll in college to the urban, predominantly ethnic minority, Los Angeles Unified School District where 50% of the graduates plan to go to a college. The persistance rate from tenth grade to graduation in the Los Angeles district is 58%.

In 1983 only one quarter of LAUSD secondary students are Anglo; 44% are Hispanic, 22% Black and 8% Asian/Pacific Islanders. In the elementary schools, 59% are Hispanic, 19% Black, 11% Asian/Pacific Island and 16% White.

More than 78 different primary languages are spoken by children attending the LAUSD. Almost one-fifth of all students receive some type of bilingual or English as a second language assistance. The highest attrition rates are recorded for Hispanic students where less than half complete high school. The LAUSD has instituted a special mandatory counseling program for tenth grade students to increase retention rates.

In light of the data, it is clear that colleges must place proper emphasis on working with feeder high schools in order to recruit graduating seniors. This will require a re-emphasis on working with these institutions which, during the past few years, have been more willing to allow counselors from private colleges on their campuses that community colleges spokespersons.

The need for closer cooperation -- and a clearer delineation of function -- is also apparent with four-year institutions. Consider, for example, the fact that the California State University and University of California systems now offer more remedial courses than ever before.

Even with this adaptation to changing student abilities and academic needs, however, four-year institutions still select those applicants with the best potential for academic success, while community colleges are expected to make successful all those who come to us.

Better communication could help both segments address common or parallel problems. For example, there is the tremendous impact of the student demand overload at the UC system. UCLA is re-directing approximately 4,000 students for fall. A good number of those students will probably choose to attend other UC campuses -- but what about the many who will not, for various reasons? Working with UCLA -- and other UC campuses -- to develop communication lines to those students could be of great advantage to community colleges and, eventually, to the UC system, too, as a continuing flow of transfer students is maintained.

Faculty

I would like to make some comments about the faculty at our institutions, encompassing those in both the teaching and counseling functions. Perhaps no other area is as important because the distinctiveness -- and the excellence -- of an institution flows directly from its faculty.

High among the list of concerns in this area is the fact that so many of our faculty are in areas in which there is declining vitality. In fact, Richard Richardson notes that the single most difficult challenge for community college administrators during the next 10 years will be "working with faculty committed to performing services for which there is no longer adequate demand."

It has been calculated that the average lifetime cost of a tenured faculty member exceeds one million dollars. (Ronald Bush and W. Clark Ames, Maricopa Community College District) While most community colleges would carefully protect an investment of this magnitude if it were spent on equipment, too few colleges take the same interest in protecting their investment in faculty.

We have a tremendous re-training responsibility for those faculty members in low vitality disciplines, a significant number of whom are looking for viable second disciplines. The fine and performing arts are a particular disaster zone.

And yet there is a great deal of resistance among faculty to undergo retraining and other forms of staff development -- quite simply, faculty don't want to be students.

Also a concern is the fact that community college faculty is aging -- in the Los Angeles Community College District, for example, the median age is 48 years. Fourteen percent are over 60 years of age. Because they feel they are nearing the end of their careers, many faculty members have stopped learning and they have stopped growing.

In addition, the faculty makeup often does not represent the ethnic mix of the areas served. This is a matter that will require continued attention as community colleges respond to the changing world around us. (Minority faculty in the LACCD increased 85 percent from 1974 to 1982.)

Another influence affecting our relationship with our faculty is the fact that, since the late 1970's, salaries have failed to keep pace with inflation. This has been true all over the country, but is is a particular problem in California, since there have not even been cost of living increases for nearly three years.

As a result, we are seeing an increased number of faculty members with part-time employment outside of the colleges which "has consequently reduced commitment to the institution and the students." (McCabe, Community College Leaders for Tomorrow)

These factors have combined to create a situation which recent studies at Arizona State University identify as a major contemporary problem in community colleges -- an overall-lack of faculty commitment. (Richardson, Community College Leaders for Tomorrow)

Counselors

This evening I have discussed reduced student commitment and the parallel development of declining faculty commitment. When added to a high degree of administrative frustration, I believe it is a fair observation to say that there is tremendous alienation on campuses. The bottom line is that nobody really wants to talk to the students -- and yet they need us more than ever before.

I submit to you that there must be a renaissance of the one-to-one relationship on our campuses -- the human relationship without which all else is meaningless.

In terms of students, this kind of relationship is epitomized by caring, concerned counselors. Ironically, however, there is a state tendency to view the need for counselors in the context of enrollment. When we have more than enough students, the state sees counselors as unnecessary.

When enrollment declines, then counselors are considered to be very much needed. At the present, the state environment is once again bringing counselors to the fore. Of course, an institution cannot maintain a corps of qualified counselors in reserve, ready to be called upon only in times of enrollment decline. This is an area that needs constant and consistent support.

Student Services

It is also ironic that, while student support services are more important than ever in terms of reversing the trend toward minimal commitment, there is quite possibly less appreciation of these services than in the past. There are two main reasons for this -- few top administrators are named from among the ranks of student service personnel, so most presidents don't really understand this function of the college. And faculty members, in general, don't appreciate students services either, as reflected in collective bargaining contracts.

In the Los Angeles Community College District, budget reductions have forced the ratio of students to counselors upward to a ratio of 1,400 to one. And yet we have seen expanded need for counseling services since we have implemented new assessment and placement programs, follow-up counseling, career counseling, and new liaison activities with high schools, universities and employers.

Educational Programs

Our educational programs reflect a need for renewed attention, as some observers say we are drifting farther and farther from where we should be.

John Roueche, director of the Program in Community College Education at the University of Texas at Austin, has observed that colleges and universities have never built curriculum based upon the needs of students. He says that we have done it based upon the choices -- and the training and experience -- of our faculty, noting that "faculty typically and predictably want to offer subject matter that they feel most competent and confident to teach."

Richardson cites another area of pressure, in terms of curriculum development -- the state. He says that "it has been common practice to describe curriculum offerings in terms that make courses sound compatible with provisions in state funding formulas that provide the most reimbursement for offering."

In our quest for stable and adequate funding, he says that "community colleges have been more than willing to leave the determination of what is transferrable to the universities, and what is career-oriented to state coordinating agencies."

If these allegations are true -- and I believe they carry the ring of authenticity -- then community colleges face a very real danger because, while the right curriculum can make a college, the wrong curriculum can destroy it.

Curriculum must respond to changing student demand, but it must also represent more than what students think they need -- it must reflect what we believe they and society need, as well. It would be a disaster to let certain areas of subject matter die, merely because of fluctuations in student demand. Community colleges need to develop alternative means for funding areas of the curriculum which contribute to the academic strength of the institutions, through such means as establishment of endowed chairs. These times call for innovative, creative solutions to very real problems.

Transfer Rates

In Fall 1983, the number of community college students transferring to the UC and the CSU systems increased 1.7 percent over Fall 1982. Although the number was smaller than it was for any year between 1970 and 1980, the increase exceeded the 0.5 percent growth between Fall 1981 and 1982 which ended the long term decline in transfers recorded for previous years.

Transfer rates varied substantially across the state for both sending and receiving colleges and no general patterns have emerged. Significant increase occured for 30 percent of the districts while 4 percent suffered substantial losses.

The numbers and percentages of ethnic minority transfer students increased from 1980 to 1983 as the percentage of whites declined to 73 percent of transfers to the UC system and 72 percent of transfers to the CSU system. Asians, Blacks, and Hispanics all increased their proportions of the transfer group, with Asians making up the largest group (12%) of transfers to UC and Hispanics the largest group (10%) of transfers to CSUC.

Associate Degree

A year and a half ago, I was asked by the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges to chair a taskforce to study the meaning and relevance of the associate degree in our technologically-oriented society. Funding was provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

That study, which resulted in a report distributed by AACJC, incorporated viewpoints solicited from one hundred community, junior and technical college districts with a total enrollment of approximately two million students. In addition, one hundred high schools and fifty Fortune 500 companies were surveyed, as well as academic and professional associations, and university professors in the field of community college education.

Also, a special effort was made to contact the state high education officers across the country, and there was a thorough study of the literature.

The study included a number of tables -- several of which have been made available to you this evening.

As you can see in Table 1, among the community college administrators responding to our surveys, more than half indicated that they see serious problems with the general education component of the associate degree. They indicated that students now have too many choices in terms of meeting general education unit requirements. They called for more general education course work, as well as more rigor and greater educational integrity. And they agreed that there is a tremendous need for more specific, updated competencies in this area.

I also found that the number of associate in arts degrees awarded by responding colleges dropped by more than 7 percent in the past few years, while there has been an increase in student demand for all other degrees, including the associate in science, associate in applied science, and associate in occupational studies.

When asked how they would change the associate degree unit configurations, the community college respondents gave us suggestions shown in Table 2. They said they would increase associate in arts behavioral science requirements by an average of 4 units, and communications by 5 units. For the associate in science, they would increase behavioral science by 4 units, communications by 3, and the humanities by 6 units.

As shown in Table 3, the colleges indicated suggested priorities in degree competencies. These priorities are contrasted with those of the business respondents - showing agreement on the importance of acquiring and actualizing knowledge, for example.

It is also interesting to note that honors programs, which are usually thought to be an indicator by which to measure the quality of educational offerings, are only offered by 28 percent of the responding colleges, as shown in Table 4.

And the colleges observed that many changes have been brought about by high technology, in terms of curriculum planning and equipment purchases. These observations, indicated in Table 5, demonstrated the tremendous influence of high technology -- and the need for continued review in this area.

The businesses responding to my inquiries stressed the need for greater emphasis on general education in two-year colleges. As shown in Table 6, they indicated that they believe there should be more emphasis on the basic skills of reading, mathematics, and oral and written communication, as well as on problem solving and getting along with other people.

As shown in Table 7, high school principals and counselors expressed concern about the strength and integrity of community college general education offerings and requirements, with nearly half (47 percent) recommending an increase in general education unit requirements at two-year colleges. (Eleven percent recommended a decrease, 42 percent saw no need for change.)

To address these issues, I made a number of recommendations as part of the associate degree study to which I referred earlier -- recommendations which are now being considered by AACJC and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Since it is clear that neither general education nor technical coursework can be relevant or valuable to students if it is beyond their abilities, I recommended development of appropriate competency standards to guarantee quality. This is a basis upon which all other improvements can be built.

And, since the quality of the degree depends, more than anything else, upon the excellence of the faculty, I recommended that a new liaison be established with universities to improve the quality of our existing teaching corps, and to develop teacher training programs to suitably equip those instructors who will be coming to community colleges in the future.

Colleges must also move from a climate of student self-advisement to a carefully planned and executed counseling process, with the emphasis placed on successful transition to the workplace or a four-year institution.

I suggested that counseling and advisement be enhanced with the appropriate technology, including use of computer programs providing information on opportunities and requirements within specific employment categories.

I also recommended the establishment of associate degree committees at each college to work with faculty, students, and four-year institutions, as well as business, industry, and labor groups. Activities could focus on such issues as counseling, orientation, matriculation, and collaborative efforts.

I also recommended efforts to attract the support of national and local foundations for studies and projects in two specific areas: first, the use of community, junior, and technical colleges as a national resource in advancing the world of work and the world of on-going education; and second, in the development of cooperative efforts between the university, community colleges, and high schools to serve a given geographical area.

NEED FOR NEW SERVICES - LIBRARY, COMPUTERS

The fourth observation relates to the status of important instructional services, including the library and the computer, both of which are integral ingredients in a quality educational program.

The past decade has seen a tremendous decline in terms of the library's place on the educational landscape. Decreases in financial support has caused reduced staffing, service hours and levels of acquisition. Libraries no longer serve integrated functions on campus -- they are relied upon for isolated functions. There is a tremendous gap, as well, in terms of the faculty's use of the library. Many are not familiar with the new technology and are intimidated by microfiche machines and video equipment. I believe that we are wasting a significant amount of our human resources due to our inability to make the most effective use of technology in this area.

Due to the continued high cost of education, libraries will have increased value as important educational resources instead of serving merely as a place from which to borrow books. But we need to raise the level of intelligence and interest among faculty, administrators and students as to what the libraries are, what they can provide, and what financial support they need to function at their full capacity.

Another important instructional service is the computer. In fact, I believe that the term "open access" now means "access to the computer." The issue of computer literacy for a high tech generation of Californians will ultimately be resolved in the community colleges -- but, as yet, we do not have the equipment to meet this tremendous need. In fact, most high schools are better equipped.

We also do not have faculty who are comfortable with computers. Many are antagonized by the jargon and confounded by the gadgetry. They find the computer threathening and bewildering. Some still aren't even comfortable using overhead projectors, so it's going to take a concerted effort to bring the techno-phobics into the world of today -- and tomorrow. But it is an effort we must make, for faculty members are the true software of the new age of learning.

Community colleges cannot neglect the computer challenge for many reasons, not the least of which is the fact that four-year institutions will be expecting transfer students to be on a par with native students in terms of computer competency. This is an important area in which we cannot neglect to adequately prepare our students.

A study for the National Science Foundation, conducted by Robert Gillespie, vice provost of the University of Washington, indicated that the average undergraduate needs at least 20 to 40 hours of computer access each year. But present computer resources nationwide permit less than 10 hours of access. Obviously, we are falling far short of meeting student needs in this vital area.

Of course, there is tremendous expense involved in adapting our colleges for the computer age. Richard Van Horn, provost of Carnegie-Mellon University, conducted a study which determined that "by the end of this decade, a 'reasonable' computer system will cost about $1,000 per student at a liberal arts college, and up to $6,000 per student at a high technology school." Obviously, community colleges would fall somewhere in the middle.

Gillespie, in the study to which I just referred, said that America's colleges and universities need to spend about $1 billion per year on computers in order to meet student needs, and he advocated spending about $100 per student on computing, which is about the national average in terms of what is spent on libraries.

NEED FOR NEW PARTNERSHIP - PRIVATE BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

This leads me to my fifth observation, the new partnership with business and industry,and with public agencies which I believe will provide at least a partial answer to the problem I just raised. And here, too, there is irony, because colleges look at business-industry related education as a threat --but it is a new way to acquire funding and equipment.

The new partnership of the Los Angeles Community College District with business and industry is bringing the District about $12 million in new funds -- funds that we otherwise would never have seen. Our response to business' needs has also resulted in donations of equipment, scholarships and opportunities for faculty members to update their own technical competencies.

The potential for support of community colleges by the private sector has only begun to be explored. Two-year colleges currently enroll nearly 40 percent of all students in post-secondary education nationwide, but only receive about one percent of donations from the private sector. (Eldon Schafer, Lane Community College, Community College Leaders for Tomorrow)

As a parallel development in this regard, it is interesting to note that we seem to be entering an era of privitization of resources. There is a growing feeling -- even within districts -- that colleges that make money should be entitled to keep it. This development, of course, could stimulate more aggressive efforts to secure private support.

Public agencies, such as the Board of Governors, the Legislature, the Governor's Office, need a very careful review as to their relationship to the operation of California Community Colleges. It seems to me that the Legislature and the Governor will continue to initiate reform measures affecting California Community Colleges for at least the next decade. These measures will focus on redefining which areas are appropriate for state funding and which are not. It should come as no surprise if there are suggestions concerning redefinition of two-year colleges, and even discussion about redefinition of the Master Plan. Also to be anticipated are attempts by the Board of Governors to homogenize community colleges throughout the state.

It has been said that a typical legislator understands the community college system based upon his or her understanding of a local college. (John Terrey, Community College Leaders for Tomorrow) Obviously, then, we will need to do a better job of communicating with our legislators in order that they understand the valuable role two-year colleges play in the state's system of higher education. As mentioned earlier, this will call for development of more student outcome data and more effective ways of communicating those data.

Without such efforts, our mission will continue to shrink, as it has done in recent years, without any formal re-definition from Sacramento. As David Breneman and Susan Nelson indicated two years ago, in their book Financing Community Colleges, financial resources are inadequate to continue with many different activities, and the real "risk of an unflinching commitment to the comprehensive mission is that ... the college will suffer across the board, becoming less competitive and less distinctive in all program areas."

SUMMARY

Futurist Alvin Toffler has said,

"If we do not learn from history, we shall be compelled to relive it.

True.

But if we do not change the future, we shall be compelled to endure it.

And that could be worse."

Our task, then, is to learn the lesson of the past year -- and to use that knowledge to prepare for the challenges ahead. I am reminded of an observation by John Gardner, who noted that most institutions suffer -- not because they cannot solve their problems, but because they cannot see their problems.

Our assignment must be the continuous review and discussion of our educational philosophy because, after all, we must be primarily educational institutions -- not social service agencies, community centers, or job training institutes.

So, we must have a clear idea about what formal education is and what it does for people, how educational experiences are best organized and coordinated, how learning is measured and insured, and what realistic limits are imposed on educators.

Only by attention to these aspects of education can community colleges achieve credibility across a broad spectrum of political opinions.

What practical steps should we take to improve education? Going back to my 5 observations, I suggest that we must follow our students more carefully, with more attention to assessing their abilities, assets, weaknesses, and aspirations. We must invest more resources in these efforts, when students come to our institutions, while they study there, and when they leave. We must have clear and respected standards. If access is to be valuable, it must be linked to achievement for students and credibility with the world outside our doors. We should not allow the challenge of declining academic skills to water down our standards everywhere. We must plan our curriculum as a sequential set of learning experiences, not as some potpourri of disconnected courses designed to attract everyone in the community. Effective education results from steady and systematic growth; it does not come from haphazard choices. If we, as educational professionals, refuse to assume leadership in improving the structure of our curriculum, then our institutions will lose students to those colleges which do.

We must revitalize our faculty, strengthen our instructional services, and work to develop more effective partnerships with business and industry. To do less is to abdicate leadership in shaping change for community colleges.

I appreciate the opportunity to share these views with you. I would offer to you and to Californians generally the wisdom of Alfred North Whitehead some seventy-five years ago:

> In the conditions of modern life the rule is absolute, the race which does not value trained intelligence is doomed. Not all your heroism, not all your social charm, not all your wit, not all your victories on land or at sea, can move back the finger of fate. Today we maintain ourselves. Tomorrow science will have moved forward yet one more step, and there will be no appeal from the judgment which will then be pronounced on the uneducated.

Now we can add: "or on the society that does not educate."

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